THE

LETTERS

OF

CHARLOTTE.

VOL. II.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30
NOV
05

THE

LETTERS

OF

CHARLOTTE,

DURING HER CONNEXION WITH

WERTER.

Grazia ſola di ſu ne vaglia, inanti
Che piu 'l deſio d'amore al cor s'invecchi.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL, IN THE STRAND.

M,DCC,LXXXVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM
30
65
NOV

CHARLOTTE, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

WERTER has been here, and prevented my writing to you ſo ſoon as I intended. I will now proceed with the ſtory of Henry, on whoſe behalf you expreſs yourſelf with ſo much feeling. Believe me, he is worthy of your commiſeration.

It was not till after a peremptory command from my father, that Henry could be prevailed on to dine with us. He had much rather have amuſed himſelf in the woods. My father's command, however, was not to be reſiſted; and Henry dined with us.—I was ſhocked to ſee him ſo pale; and privately told Albert my opinion, that Henry was in love.—"Henry," I ſaid, "if this were the proper ſeaſon of the year, I ſhould ſay, you had robbed the garden of all the ſnow-drops." This brought the colour into his cheeks ſo much, that Albert ſaid, "You mean the beet-

beet-root, Charlotte, for the colour is high, and I ſuppoſe temporary." This occaſioned a general ſmile, and heightened the confuſion of Henry. I pitied him, and was ſorry for what I had ſaid. He hung down his head, and I could juſt ſee ſo much of his eyes, as to perceive a ſtarting tear. I wiſhed to relieve him; when Albert added, "I ſuppoſe Henry has changed complexion with ſome delicate girl."—"No," ſaid I, "Henry is too great a favourite with the muſes, to hold intercourſe with mortals. "Pray, Sir," I added, "to which of the nine do you give the preference?"

—"Ma-

—"Madam," replied Henry, "when I am reading Petrarch, I cannot but adore the muſe that gives language to the inſpirations of love; but when I am ſo happy, madam, as to hear your harpſichord, I am ſenſible of the immediate preſence of the charming muſe that fills the ſoul with harmony, and I anticipate the bliſs of immortality."—This was too elegant a compliment to paſs unnoticed. "Sir," ſaid I, "that is a poetical effuſion ſo much in my favour, as to merit my beſt curtſey: it is a Parnaſſian flower of the moſt delicate cultivation."—This threw him into confuſion again; but

but Frederick taking up the converſation, Henry had time to recover himſelf.—"It is a difficult thing, ſometimes," ſaid Frederick, "to make a proper diſtinction between the weeds and the flowers of Parnaſſus: ſo difficult, that I have known many prefer the former to the latter; nay, I believe, moſt young people do."—"Frederick," I ſaid, "don't be ſo ſevere upon Henry's compliment and my judgment."—"Nay, madam," replied he, "you interrupt me before I declare my opinion: I was going to ſay, it was a noſegay preſented from one muſe to another."—"You

are

are right;" ſaid Albert, "though I think Henry the moſt of a muſe of the two, if we can admit the idea of a male muſe; the muſes never write themſelves: and if Henry poſſeſſes their power, he is not deſtitute of their indolence."—"Probably," I ſaid, "Henry has written ſomething."—"Madam," replied Henry, "be aſſured I have not: though I love the muſes, the muſes love not me; and I muſt confeſs, that I think all human language inadequate to expreſs the feelings on *ſome* poetical occaſions." This gave Frederick an opportunity to exerciſe his raillery reſpecting

ing Henry's feelings, and from thence adverting to his melancholy. But as I think nothing ſo inhuman as ſporting with the feelings of others, I preſently put an end to the converſation, by ſtarting a general ſubject.

My father had, all this time, been engaged in diſcourſe with W. Selftadt, about Engliſh horſes; ſo that Henry's confuſion and compliments had eſcaped his attention; and it was well they did, for it would not have been in my power to have ſtopped *his* raillery. You, my dear Carolina, have more than once

once felt the effects of my father's ſatiric jocularity.

From what I had obſerved, no doubt remained with me reſpecting Henry's melancholy. But I was extremely concerned to find myſelf the cauſe of his miſery; and began to conſider in what manner I ſhould act ſo as to relieve him from his diſtreſs, without injury to my own feelings. It was at this time, my deareſt friend, that I wanted your counſel and aſſiſtance. I had nobody in whom I could repoſe confidence: Thereſa was in the town, and you was then in England.—I conſidered Henry's natural diſpoſition

ſition and acquirements, and I found that they all contributed to root the paſſion in his heart. I well knew that it would be the height of cruelty to treat it with deriſion; and I fancied that I knew enough of the human mind, to uſe him with reſpect, without flattering him with hopes that could never be realized.

LETTER XXXII.

SHE muſt be ſtrangely deſtitute of feeling, who, conſcious that ſhe is beloved by another, withholds from her lover, that ſhare of reſpect

reſpect and complaiſance to which he would be entitled, and which ſhe would pay him, as a viſiting acquaintance. Though this conduct is very common, there is in it ſomething extremely ridiculous, and, in my opinion, extremely wrong. Notwithſtanding the difference of our ſituations, and that this kind of conduct might not, according to general conſtruction, appear improper in me, I determined not to add to the ſufferings of Henry by adopting it.

I had now made conſiderable progreſs in the Engliſh language, and, at the requeſt of Albert, had tranſlated

tranſlated '*Haſſan*, or the *Camel-driver*,' the moſt beautiful eclogue of Collins, one of the modern Engliſh poets; and, Albert being impatient for a copy, I ſent the tranſlation to Henry, requeſting him to tranſcribe it for me. He ſoon returned me a copy, and expreſſed a deſire to make one for himſelf. As I knew that he was fond of the Engliſh language, I complied with his requeſt, and when he returned my tranſlation, it was accompanied with ſome complimentary verſes to myſelf. Unfortunately, the ſervant, in coming from Henry, was met by my father, who, having occaſion

ſion to ſend him elſewhere, took the papers from him, read them, and the immediate diſmiſſion of Henry was the conſequence.

The diſcovery of his paſſion, and the diſmiſſion from his ſervice, gave a double ſtab to the peace of Henry: his melancholy increaſed, and ſoon terminated in a total deprivation of his reaſon; his frenzy became deſperate; and it was found neceſſary to have recourſe to confinement, and the means uſually practiſed for the relief of the moſt miſerable of the human race. In this unhappy ſituation he continued a whole year, and gradually relapſed

lapſed into his former ſtate of melancholy. In this ſtate he remains: an example of the influence of paſſion on delicate feelings; the wonder of the vulgar, and the pity of his friends.

Such, my deareſt Carolina, is the ſtory, ſuch have been the ſufferings, and ſuch is the ſituation, of the unhappy youth, the object of your enquiry, and of your commiſſeration. As he was the principal ſupport of his mother, ſhe alſo became an object of compaſſion; and, that beſt of women, my deareſt mother, when Henry became inſane, allowed her a decent main-

tenance; and ſince my mother's death, I have added ſomething to her bounty; and though I have no hope, that Henry's mind will ever be re-illumined with the light of reaſon, yet I truſt, that Providence will enable me to protect him from the common ills of life, the bitterneſs of poverty, and the wanton paſtime of unfeeling minds.—Alas! I cannot do more—I will not do leſs.—Adieu!

LET-

LETTER XXXIII.

YOUR reflections on the ſtory of Henry, do much credit to your underſtanding, as well as to your humanity; and your ſolicitation to contribute to his relief, I regard as a moſt exalted proof of that friendſhip for me, which you have ever profeſſed, and from which I have derived no inconſiderable ſhare of my happineſs; and though I well know, that my dear Carolina is "more willing to give than to receive," and that no character ſo well becomes her as

that of a benefactreſs; yet, having ſufficiently provided for Henry, I cannot think of diverting the current of your benevolence from other objects, equally entitled to the tear of compaſſion, and the relief of generoſity.

No, my dear girl—this muſt not be;—but as I am unaccuſtomed wholly to refuſe the ſolicitations of my Carolina, I will, in ſome meaſure, and conditionally, agree to your requeſt.—My dear girl well knows, on what terms we hold the breath of exiſtence—"the battle is not to the ſtrong"—the grave may receive Charlotte, and leave

Henry

Henry deſtitute.—Need I ſay more? —I know that my Carolina will become a Charlotte to Henry:—that he will find a protecting angel in her friend, when Charlotte is no more.

LETTER XXXIV.

THE arrival of a Spaniſh gentleman at the town, who was very particular in his enquiries after Mrs. W. the mother of my Thereſa, required her preſence there; and Albert ſtaid ſome days, on buſineſs of his own. He is now returned, and Werter continues

nues to viſit us as uſual. I am greatly at a loſs for Thereſa, as you may well ſuppoſe; though Albert is enough at home to prevent much ſolicitude reſpecting Werter. The moſt cordial friendſhip ſubſiſts between them; and I ſhall be extremely happy if the love of Werter for Charlotte ſhall be loſt in his friendſhip for Albert. This could not fail being productive of much happineſs; and I truſt in Providence, it will be ſo.

I am greatly obliged to my dear Carolina, for the repeated inſtances I receive of her friendly regard, and eſtimation of my ſentiments.

You

You ſay right, my dear girl, I am *not* vain of my conqueſts, as they are generally called. There can be little merit in a conqueſt gained without reſiſtance, and where the vanquiſhed prefer chains to freedom. An involuntary paſſion may excite pity, but that mind muſt be very weak in which it excites vanity. And yet what is ſo apt to make us vain, as the idea of having at our diſpoſal, the happineſs of others? Where the paſſion is real, I always regard it in too ſerious a light to make it an object of vanity; and ſurely there is a crime in wantonly ſporting with the feelings

of

of others. I am, therefore, often ſurprized, and as frequently hurt, by the conduct of thoſe who take delight in expoſing the weakneſſes of their lovers, without conſidering, that, at the ſame time, they expoſe their own. But when they are charged with the impropriety, the uſual apology is, that "they know not the gentleman's *real* ſentiments." I think a man cannot long feign a paſſion without being diſcovered: —a hypocrite is a difficult character to ſuſtain in every thing but religion, as it is more eaſy to affect ſolemnity than paſſion.—Where affection

tion is feigned, coquetry is allowable in thoſe who have inclination and ſpirits to ſupport it; but I ſhould rather chooſe to treat pretended love with ſilent contempt.

You will perceive, my dear friend, that I regard lovers, as poor people do beggars: I give them good words, and tell them to go to thoſe who are richer than myſelf. Indeed, there is ſelf-intereſt at the bottom of this charity.—I have a wonderful facility in aſſuming the ſituations of others, and frequently recollect the language of a certain lover,* who, with no ſmall ingenuity,

* Sylvius to Phœbe, in 'As you like it.'

nuity, reminds his miſtreſs, that ſhe may, ſome time, want the conſolation he ſolicits.

If ever---as that ever may be near---
You meet in ſome freſh cheek the pow'r of fancy,
Then ſhall you know the wounds invifible
That love's keen arrows make.

Theſe poetical predictions, you know, are not to be totally diſregarded.

Vanity, you ſee, has nothing to do in my ſyſtem. I regard it as an exotic not worth cultivation; and when I perceive it budding, I try to pluck it up by the roots, but its texture is ſuch, that it generally breaks

breaks in the ground. Sometimes it ſeems to have loſt all power of vegetation; at others, it ſhoots up again in an hour. Sometimes it will bud when I am reading Engliſh; but the very ſight of a Greek alphabet ſtops it in an inſtant.

If there were a poſſibility of deducing a right to be vain, I ſhould claim mine from having it in my power to call Carolina and Thereſa my friends, and Albert, by a dearer name; for the affection of my female friends, as well as that of Albert is founded, I truſt, on the baſis of thoſe qualities of the mind, without which friendſhip and love

have

have no claim to that permanency by which they are ripened to perfection.—That our friendſhip, my dear Carolina, may remain durable and happy, is never omitted in the beſt wiſhes of Charlotte.

LETTER XXXV.

ALAS, my Carolina!—I flatter myſelf with hopes that are vain. The paſſion of Werter, I fear, knows no bounds. Laſt night whilſt I was playing a pathetic air on my harpſichord, Albert was reading, and Werter leaned on the back

back of my chair, and turned over the leaves of the muſic as I played; at laſt I perceived his hand tremble, and in turning over the laſt page, his tears dropped on my arm. I was alarmed, and inſtantly ſtruck into a lively air, *con ſpirito*, but confuſedly, and, for a moment, in the wrong key. The ſudden change, with the diſſonance, interrupted Albert, who ſaid, "Why, Charlotte, ſuch a change as that, is enough to ſhake Werter's nerves to pieces!"—Werter walked about the room in agitation; I played ſtill louder, and Albert reſumed his reading.

I was

I was diſtreſſed. It is at theſe moments, that I doubly regret the loſs of Thereſa's company. I never more anxiouſly wiſhed for my father to come in. Albert having finiſhed the book he was reading, went up ſtairs for the next volume. —I expoſtulated with Werter— "Forgive me, Charlotte," he ſaid, "forgive my weakneſs—yet why do I call it weakneſs?—it is the effect of that attachment which"— "Conſider, Werter!" I ſaid, "conſider!—and be clam."—Albert entered the room, and I left off playing. I perceived it was with difficulty that Werter could compoſe his

his ſpirits. Fortunately my father came in, and my alarms were diſſipated in general converſation.

The diſquietude theſe ſcenes give me, is inconceivable; and I look forward with terror to ſucceeding days.—Say, my Carolina, what can I do?—Albert is impatient—my father ſolicitous—O, my dear friend!—when will my heart find peace again?—when ſhall it be undiſturbed by any emotion, but that of happineſs?—

LET-

LETTER XXXVI.

THAT our happineſs or miſery ſhould ſo frequently depend on others, is the moſt unanſwerable proof that ſociety is the proper ſphere of human action; and that he was well acquainted with human nature, who ſaid, "None of us liveth to himſelf."—To philoſophize, you will ſay, argues a mind at eaſe:—and the mind of your Charlotte *is* at eaſe—Werter is gone.

It is ſome days ſince we ſaw him laſt.* He met Albert and me at the

* See Werter, Letter xxxvii.

the end of the terrace in the evening: we ſat down; but Werter walked backwards and forwards with emotion. I ſaw his agitation, and attributed it to a painful recollection of paſt events. My mind, from the ſame principle, was filled with the image of my dear mother: I ſpoke of her virtues—ſource of tender, of inexhauſtible contemplation!—I recalled to my memory thoſe happy evenings when—ſitting round our winter fire,—Albert has often thrown aſide his books, and received more wiſdom from her converſation than they could teach. —Happy! happy evenings!"—I

ſaid, "You, Albert, as one of her children, received her dying benediction: ſhe bleſſed us—with her laſt breath."—Albert embraced me tenderly:—"She did, Charlotte," he ſaid, "ſhe did, and we *ſhall* be happy."—Werter ſhed tears: I knew not then that they were the tears of ſeparation as well as of ſympathy.

A day or two afterwards, we received a letter from him, by which we learn, that he is employed in ſome truſt under the Miniſter. Albert is fearful that the ſpirit and eccentricity of Werter will militate againſt his court intereſt. I hope, how-

however, that buſineſs, diſſipation, and other objects, will reduce the ſtrength of his partiality for me, into that ſpecies of friendſhip which may contribute to our happineſs.—Once more, my dear Carolina, the heart of your Charlotte, enjoys domeſtic peace.—Adieu!

LETTER XXXVII.

THE indiſpoſition of your worthy aunt, is a circumſtance that grieves me, not only in itſelf, but as it deprives me of your promiſed viſit. As you do not come,

we ſhall not go to the ball: for—O Carolina! how ſhall I mention it? — preparations are making — and the day approaches—*that* day—O my ſweet friend!—may happy years ſucceed it!—

And will you not come, and ſee your friend, your Charlotte — I cannot write—Albert is gone for Thereſa — My heart flutters, my hand trembles—Adieu!—Pray heaven for white hours!

LET-

LETTER XXXVIII.

THE ceremony is performed, which binds me for ever to Albert. All my friends were preſent, except my dear Carolina and Werter. It was my father's pleaſure, that our nuptials ſhould be public.—And now, my dear girl, the fate of Charlotte,—the important act,—the irrevocable word—is ratified! Have compaſſion on poor Adolphus Ferdinand, and accompany your Charlotte on her new journey.—Again adieu!

LETTER XXXIX.

HOW happily do you unite ſincerity and elegance! — Your laſt letter charms me, and I truſt in Providence for the completion of your predictions. — I read a part of it to Albert—"Tell her," he ſaid, "that I love her, for loving you; and that I will do all in my power to eſtabliſh her prophetic character, ſo long as ſhe propheſies felicity to Charlotte."— And ſo he will; for my deareſt Albert is not the ſlave of paſſion. I have witneſſed ſeveral inſtances of his

his ſteadineſs in friendſhip; and what is love but the moſt zealous friendſhip?

The evening before the ceremony took place, Albert, with great good humour, obſerved, that it ſometimes happened, women had favours to requeſt, or rather, ſaid he, orders to give to their intended huſbands, which, being neglected a certain time, were not always complied with. "Now," added Albert, "I know that my dear Charlotte will never aſk of Albert in vain, becauſe ſhe will never make an improper requeſt; but as the laſt compliment I can pay her as a bache-

bachelor, I beg of you, Charlotte, to make ſome demand, in complying with which, I may conclude the ſervices of a lover before marriage."

I was happy in this opportunity of mentioning a circumſtance, that I had often wiſhed, but did not know how to introduce.—"Yes, Albert," I ſaid, "I will aſk a favour of you, a ſerious favour."—"What, Charlotte?"—he ſaid, with impatience, for he ſaw I was agitated—"what does my dear Charlotte aſk?"—"O Albert!" I ſaid, "in our happineſs let us not forget the miſeries of others:—you know

know not Albert—neither does my father know—that I am the only guardian—except heaven—the ſole guardian of poor Henry—unfortunate and innocent"—"Had it been a ſtranger, nay, and unworthy too," ſaid Albert, "I ſhould have confirmed thy bounty; but for the poor young man, whoſe ſufferings ariſe from a love for Charlotte, I will provide him amply; and I am happy Charlotte," he added, "I am happy you have mentioned it."

This, my dear Carolina, was my laſt requeſt. Albert has provided for Henry and his mother: they can never want the common com-

forts

forts of life. You cannot conceive how this action endeared Albert to me: it gave eaſe to my mind; and added luſtre to the torch of Hymen.

LETTER XL.

ALWAYS happy to meet the wiſhes of my dear friend, the following are the lines written to me, by the unfortunate Henry, which diſcovered his paſſion to my father, and occaſioned his diſmiſ-

ſion.

ſion. You will recollect, that they accompanied my tranſlation of *Haſſan*, which I would have alſo ſent, but think it too imperfect.

Go, ſimple verſe, with Charlotte's matchleſs ſtrain,
— The humble daiſy with the eglantine —
Reveal what artleſs Henry ſtrives to hide;
Reveal the woe that drowns this heart of mine,

Tell her, 'tis not alone the favour'd roſe
That drinks the nectar of the morning dew;
The lowly field-flower ſinks with liquid pearl,
And in the bleſſing finds affliction too.

Tell her, the lowlieſt of the admiring throng,
Whoſe verſe her flattering kindneſs taught to flow,
By fortune baniſh'd from the ſoothing ſmile,
In ſecret ſorrow muſes o'er his woe.

So

So when the choriſters of vocal woods
Have ſung their amorous ſongs the live-long day,
Sad Philomela to the night complains,
And lonely warbles on the cheerleſs ſpray.

Sweet, ſorrow-breathing bird! O might my ſtrain
In aught but melancholy equal thine,
Then ſhould that pity which thy ſong inſpires,
That pity then ſhould ſooth this breaſt of mine.

But me no muſes taught with ſkilful ſtrains
To mock the harmony of heavenly ſpheres;
The muſe of melancholy blots my verſe,
And brings no other aid than ſighs and tears.

On earth no garland grows for this ſad brow;—
For me, alas! the fates unkindly wove
The ſable cypreſs of conſuming grief
With thy ſweet roſebuds, hope-deluding love!

A heaven,

A heaven, O Charlotte! is thy matchleſs form,
Where dwell thoſe powers that are more divine:
There the illumin'd ſtar of ſcience glows;—
The graces in a conſtellation ſhine!

I hear harmonious ſounds—'tis Charlotte's voice!—
I hear her ſtrike the ſorrow-ſoothing lyre;
Ah! how perſuaſive is that melting air,
That makes my boſom thrill with new deſire!

But, O preſumptuous youth! forbear to tell
With what emotions thy fond breaſt may glow:—
Hide thee, vain youth, in ſome ſequeſter'd ſhade,
Where Walheim's waving willows weep thy woe!

You may diſcover, in this haſty compoſition, the ſeeds of genius, which time and cultivation might have ripened to maturity.—Abandoned

doned by reaſon, the muſes have not forſaken Henry; he ſometimes writes for a few minutes, verſes that reſemble the united melody of birds: a kind of muſic without harmony.

LETTER XLI.

YOUR obſervations on the abſence of Werter, are very juſt; and it has been well remarked, that abſence does not always eradicate paſſion. I remember one of the Engliſh poets obſerves, abſence acts on the mind of a lover, as

as a tempeſtuous wind does on flames of fire, which, if weak, are quickly extinguiſhed; but when extended, burn with double fury.—It is upon this principle, I ſuppoſe, that the heroines of ancient romance doomed their knights to certain periods of abſence: ſo that every thing we read in thoſe curious productions, are not entirely deſtitute of nature.

I have juſt received a letter from Werter,* which affords me ſome hope of his forming an attachment with a Miſs B. of whom he ſpeaks in high terms, and as one whoſe ideas

* See Werter, Letter XLII.

ideas correſpond with his own. His letter, however, is in the ſame ſtrain of enthuſiaſm as uſual, and he regrets his abſence from Walheim. I wiſh the charms of Miſs B. may reconcile him to his ſituation.

We have—or, more properly, Thereſa has had, a viſitor from the town: Erneſtus M.—He is a lover of Thereſa's, but, unfortunately for him, he is a great beau; a ſpecies of animal, to which Thereſa has an invincible antipathy. Certainly, a minute attention to external ornament indicates interior imbecility. But allowance, I think, ought to be made for ſituation and

circum-

circumſtances: a continual reſidence in a town, may demand that attention to dreſs, which, in the country, would be totally unneceſſary; I mean in a certain claſs of people, whoſe buſineſs it is to engage reſpect, and to conciliate eſteem; with a gentleman it can make no difference: he will always be well dreſſed; but when he makes even a ſplendid appearance, it will be without a ſingle article that goes towards conſtituting a beau.

A man of this ſtamp is incapable of love; and Erneſtus M. knows ſo little of it, that he cannot even aſſume a paſſion, which, we are

told, "all can feign, but few can feel." A total neglect of ſelf, is a common conſequence of real affection for another; but this kind of gentry no ſooner conceive a *penchant*, as they term it—beaux always ſpeak French, you know—than they endeavour to ſhew it by a particular attention to their own perſons; as if, like the ſun, they were determined to melt one by the glare of their appearance. And this is the caſe with Erneſtus M. who came here ſo outrageouſly genteel, that Thereſa affected not to know him, and his introductory compliments, of courſe, being loſt, I never ſaw

any

any body look ſo fooliſh, and could ſcarcely refrain laughing.

How odious is affectation! To ſee this man now, incapable of any one generous idea, deſtitute of all thoſe nice diſtinctions, that delicacy of ſentiment, and elegance of accompliſhment, which are requiſite to excite even attention in ſuch a mind as Thereſa's: to ſee ſuch a man, tricked out in the tinſel frippery of a town beau, come on a ſerious embaſſy to Thereſa W!— affecting to ſhew his attachment by ogling with eyes, in which no expreſſion is to be found, but that of ſelf-complacency; by ſmiles

which degenerate into a grinning, expreſſive of conſummate felicity for the poſſeſſion of ſome rare qualities, inviſible to every one but himſelf!—To ſee all this, is enough to exhauſt the patience of a ſtoic: "But to be the object of ſuch addreſſes," Thereſa ſays, "is ſurely a puniſhment for ſin, and a warning ſent from heaven, to guard one againſt the horrible crimes of hypocriſy and affectation!"

"And why," ſaid I, "of hypocriſy?—perhaps the man loves you, though he has a mighty ſilly way of ſhewing it."—"It is impoſſible;" replied Thereſa, "he may, indeed, have

have ſome real regard to what little fortune I poſſeſs; but if he is capable of any friendly attachment, which, however, I do not allow, it is already in the poſſeſſion of another lady: a lady previouſly attached to a gentleman of a quite oppoſite character. His name is Antonine; her's Adelaide. Erneſtus was introduced to Adelaide as the friend of her lover, and, like the ſerpent in Paradiſe, he determined on the ſeduction of Adelaide, and ſo far ſucceeded, that Antonine preſently diſcovered he had loſt both his miſtreſs and his friend. Nothing," added Thereſa, "could

equal

equal the miſery of Antonine, as you may readily conceive, when I tell you, that he reſembled Werter in almoſt every thing, but abilities. To find himſelf, one day, the happieſt of men, and counting on long years of felicity to come—and the next, deſtitute of all that, in his eyes, could give a charm to exiſtence; to think that he who had been an object of envy, muſt never again feel that peace, which is the balm of life; that a perpetual ſeparation muſt take place, and the hands of Antonine and Adelaide never be rejoined;—that every thing was ſacrificed to the vanity

of

of a wretch, incapable of ſetting a proper value on what Antonine eſteemed beyond all riches; for the vanity of an amour with Adelaide, was all the happineſs Erneſtus could know:—the contemplation of theſe objects, induced Antonine to retire into this neighbourhood, with a reſolution never to reviſit a place which muſt remind him that he once was happy, and redouble thoſe inexpreſſible ſorrows, which a mind like his muſt ſuffer from divided affection."

"Indeed, Thereſa," I ſaid, "I pity Antonine; and if he is, as you ſay, in this neighbourhood, let us endea-

endeavour to adminiſter to his relief, by making him one of our muſical party, for, by your deſcription, his acquaintance is not altogether unworthy of cultivation." — "I know him," replied Thereſa, "and will introduce him, and you will then be able to judge whether I have done him juſtice in a little poem I am writing, under the title of *Antonine* and *Adelaide*."

"But how is it, Thereſa," I ſaid, "that you permit ſo unworthy" — She interrupted me: "Make yourſelf eaſy, my dear Charlotte; I fancy the preſence of Erneſtus will never

never again contaminate Walheim on *my* account."

Such, my dear Carolina, is the viſitant we have had, and, I thank heaven, are never likely to have again!—Be grateful to Providence, Carolina, that Adolphus Ferdinand is not a beau!—Adieu.

LETTER XLII.

SO you compare Walheim to thoſe mountains, in which Don Quixote met with Cardenio, Dorothea, and various other lovers—and I muſt confeſs, that, what with

with your Ferdinand—whom you have left out of your catalogue of Walheim ſwains—Henry, Antonine, &c. we are as much haunted with romantic lovers, as any ſpot on *modern* plains. I think it would not only be charitable, but a kind of juſtice in you, to come and claim your own ſhare of the ſpoil, or it may chance to go aſtray, and be loſt.

You complain of me, and ſay, I am indolent, or that I ſhould write more frequently. But you know how my attention it taken up with the children; and I am unwilling to reſign, even to Thereſa, any part

part of my charge--the ſacred charge of the beſt of parents.—When I cut their bread and butter with my own hands, and ſee them all ſmiling around me; when at night, they all kneel before me, and liſp the prayers their dear mother taught them, I think her bleſſings deſcend from heaven, and I feel my heart glow with the melancholy rapture of a pilgrim ſurrounded by the precious relicts of a departed ſaint.

As Albert predicted, ſo it is: the forms and ceremonies of a court ill agree with the liberal temper of Werter, and we daily expect him at Walheim. Beſides the natural

contempt

contempt he cannot but entertain for ſuch as he muſt neceſſarily have aſſociated with, and his averſion to a life of diſſipation, he is urged by the peculiarity of his taſte, to ſeek thoſe ſhades wherein he may indulge his meditative fancy, and contemplate the beauties of the univerſe. Whether he has reſigned or not, I cannot tell. I hope, however, to find, that Miſs B. has had ſome influence on his heart.—Be this as it may, fortunately for me, I have Thereſa, who wiſhes to ſee my dear Carolina as the friend of her Charlotte, and to embrace her as one deſerving *many* friends.—Adieu!

LET-

LETTER XLIII.

WERTER has not only reſigned, but is now at Walheim. He paid us his firſt viſit yeſterday. "Once more," he ſaid, "I am come to enjoy a life of rationality. Like a knight-errant, I have been in queſt of adventures, and met with nothing worth combating; and as to happineſs, I can find it no where but at Walheim."—"What!" ſaid Thereſa, "no windmills?"—"Yes," replied Werter, "the windmills of prejudice,

prejudice, formality, and folly: I did indeed attack one or two; but it was an infant contending with Hercules."

"There is no true felicity," added he, "but in the country, when you are ſo happy as to meet with friends who can enter into your ſentiments, and have a reliſh for intellectual pleaſures, without which there can be no real happineſs in exiſtence. All the comforts of this world," he continued, "are comprized in a few things, elegantly deſcribed by an Engliſh poet,* who

* Thomſon.

who ſeems to me to have perfectly comprehended the true nature of ſocial pleaſure.

An elegant ſufficiency, content,
Retirement, tranquil quiet, friendſhip, books,
Eaſe and alternate labour, uſeful life,
Progreſſive virtue——

"Moſt of theſe advantages," ſaid Thereſa, "may be found in towns." —"Happy they!" replied Werter, "who find them there, or any where!—But the attention of people reſiding in towns, is generally directed to other objects: the petty vanity of aping the manners of a court; the perpetual contention for intereſt;

intereſt; the buſtle of trade; and the vulgar prejudice, that wealth can procure every thing, when, on the contrary, it generally extinguiſhes all deſire of intellectual attainment;—all theſe," ſaid Werter, "are cauſes that, with many others, operate againſt the cultivation of thoſe virtues and that diſpoſition of mind, that form the felicity of which I am ſpeaking. Beſides," continued he, "theſe things, like baleful weeds, choak the tender plant of friendſhip: you rarely know it flouriſh in towns, even amongſt your own ſex; when I ſee an inſtance of tender

tender friendſhip ſubſiſting in a great town, I think it is like diſcovering a ſweet violet in a foreſt over-run with brambles and bruſh-wood. And without friendſhip," he added, "though ſo few in the world know more of it than the name, I do not allow a poſſibility of happineſs:

Is aught ſo fair,
In all the dewy landſcape of the ſpring,
In the bright eye of Heſper or the morn,
In nature's faireſt forms, is aught ſo fair
As virtuous friendſhip?

"But what is peculiarly grateful to me," ſaid Werter, "is the opportunity the country affords of

perpetually contemplating the beauties of nature. There are few of the purſuits of a town life that do not contract the mind; and nothing more ſo, than the regular routine of that filly diſſipation, in which amuſement is ſought, but never found. I pity thoſe of any liberality of ſentiment, who are confined to ſuch miſerable drudgery. The feelings I moſt delight in," added he, " are thoſe I experience when, in a fine morning, I aſcend a mountain that commands an extenſive proſpect of woods and waters—I look around me, and my heart glows with univerſal benevolence.

lence. My mind expands with the proſpect before me, and I forget all the petty diſtinctions of mortality, by contemplating the whole globe as one ſpot—as a little paradiſe, diverſified with innumerable beautiful objects, which receive additional ſplendour and cheerfulneſs from the rays of a refulgent ſun—But when I deſcend again, and mix among mankind, my paradiſe, which in the eye of philoſophy is at moſt but a point, becomes ſtill ſmaller, and I find it only at Walheim. You cannot blame me then," he ſaid, ſmiling, "if, like the dove from the ark, after in vain

ſeeking

ſeeking for repoſe elſewhere, I return to the ſpot where I know it may be found."

My father and Albert ſoon after came in, and received Werter with great friendſhip; but I diſcovered embarraſſment in the countenance of Werter when, he complimented Albert on our union; and felt my heart ſink within me, when I ſaw him give a ſignificant glance at my ring, which, I believe, he had not noticed before.

I have ſince, been reflecting on Werter's idea of ſituation, as it reſpects happineſs; and I cannot ſay, that I think external objects can

have ſo much influence as he aſcribes to them. Felicity muſt originate, and have its reſidence in the mind,* and is to be acquired only by the cultivation of thoſe virtues which, being intellectual, cannot be ſo affected by external objects, as to loſe their nature, or fail of producing their natural fruit, that peace and contentment, which the operation of external circumſtances can neither give nor take away.

Add

* The leading idea of Charlotte's obſervation is beautifully expreſſed by Goldſmith:

Vain, very vain my weary ſearch to find
That bliſs which only centres in the mind.

TRAVELLER.

Add to this, that it is certain, happineſs is pretty equally diſtributed among mankind. Like the warmth of the ſun, we all enjoy it, but in different degrees, and ſometimes with long intervals of darkneſs. At one time, it is obſtructed by the paſſing clouds of providence; at another by the miſts of error, and the ſtorms of paſſion. —That my deareſt Carolina may ever enjoy that "ſunſhine of the breaſt," without which the world is a gloomy wilderneſs, will always be the ſincere wiſh of her affectionate Charlotte.

LET-

LETTER XLIV.

ALAS, my Carolina! I ſee no change in the ſentiments or conduct of Werter. Nothing but the continual preſence of Thereſa reſtrains him from the commiſſion of a thouſand follies; and ſhe is obliged to leave Walheim this week; having effects to receive from Spain, which devolve to her as the only remaining repreſentative of her mother.

Independent of this, our time paſſes not unpleaſantly at Walheim lodge. The children are quite

quite happy in the return of Werter, who has told them many new ſtories, and has loaded them with new trinkets.

Our converſations, as uſual, turn chiefly on objects of taſte, muſic and literature; and you would laugh to hear the arguments of Werter and Albert reſpecting Homer and Oſſian: * for Oſſian, you muſt know, has ſupplanted Homer in the good graces of Werter, which not a little expoſes him to the ridicule of Albert, who draws compariſons between them highly degrading to Oſſian.—"Homer," ſays

* See Werter, Letter LXI.

ſays Albert, " is the father of the two moſt regular and finiſhed poems in the world, in both of which you find all the requiſites of the epic: ſublime images, nervous and flowery diction, a beginning, a middle, and an end. To theſe," adds he, " you oppoſe a collection of northern ballads, deſtitute of every principle of an epic poem, except, here and there, a romantic image which pleaſes an imagination that, like yours, delights in eccentricity."—Werter, however, has a great deal to ſay for his friend Oſſian. My father, attending particularly to Albert, takes his ſide of

the

the queſtion, and tells Werter, that he ſeems to have exchanged "a pocket companion of gold for one of lead."—"No, Sir," replies Albert, "of lead ore, if you pleaſe, for it glitters more than the gold, which is no uncommon thing even with droſs."

For my part, I am much pleaſed with many paſſages in Oſſian; but the perpetual recurrence of the ſame images, and a continual effort to effect the ſublime, ſo wearies the mind, that I can never read more than a few pages at a time. Oſſian reſembles a tremendous rock, over-hung with waving woods,

woods, where you may diſcover foaming cataracts, gloomy caverns, and diſmal precipices. Homer is like a fertile country, in which you may at once contemplate the variegated beauties of woods and waterfalls; torrents that ruſh with impetuoſity from lofty mountains, and ſtreams that murmur through Arcadian vallies. Like the ſhield of Achilles, the poems of Homer preſent the whole world to our view.

LETTER XLV.

I RECEIVED both your letters, my dear friend, and am glad to find you have had a healthful and agreeable journey. Indeed, you have been, what would appear to me, a long, long way; but to you, who are a traveller, I ſuppoſe the diſtance was not extraordinary. I hope you have ſettled every thing to your aunt's ſatisfaction; and that your next journey will be to Walheim.

Thereſa has been gone upwards of a month; ſhe left us the day after

after I wrote my laſt letter to you. She will paſs the Chriſtmas holidays with us, when I hope our party will receive the addition of my dear Carolina's company. I am ſo accuſtomed to have a companion, that theſe winter evenings are ſometimes dreary; the children go early to bed, and Albert is a good deal engaged. I hope, therefore, you will commence your holidays as ſoon as poſſible; in truth, I want your aſſiſtance, your advice—for, Werter—O Carolina! my heart feels heavy as I write the name.

His aſſiduities are encreaſed, and Albert daily finds him at Walheim lodge,

lodge, but always bids him welcome, and has never yet intimated any diſapprobation of his viſits.

But I ſee, my deareſt girl, I ſee that this unfortunate paſſion is making rapid progreſs in the boſom of Werter. Sometimes, when he ſits ſilent by me, I diſcover tears in his eyes, whilſt they are earneſtly fixed on my ring, at which he gazes till the colour forſakes his cheek, and a deep ſigh gives him relief. I am obliged to have inſtant recourſe to my harpſichord, and to play ſome airs, by which he is particularly affected. Fortunately this expedient never fails of the deſired effect;

effect; and I cannot help comparing myſelf to David ſoothing the paſſion of Saul. So true is it, that there is divinity in muſic, and ſuch is the magic power of harmony!—When I reprove his weakneſs, he anſwers me with ſighs, but aſſures me, he will endeavour to repreſs every feeling that may diſturb our peace.

I remind him of Miſs B. "I love her, my dear Charlotte," he ſays, "becauſe ſhe has a liberal mind, and becauſe ſhe reſembles you—So I told you in my letter—and though it carries the appearance of a compliment, yet, believe me,

my

my heart dictates. Miſs B. was to me, as a picture of Charlotte, endued with the power of ſpeech."—"Miſs B." I ſaid, "is but little obliged to you."—"Indeed, Charlotte," he replied, "I told her the ſame thing; and ſo highly does ſhe think of you, that ſhe is proud of being thought like ſo amiable an original."—"'Tis well," I ſaid, "ſhe is not likely to ſee me, or your judgment, Werter, would ſuffer very conſiderably in her opinion. Your partiality," I added, "gives grace even to foibles, and thus, beholding with diſordered optics, you miſrepreſent."—He would

would not allow the inference; and I have the mortification to find Miſs B. on whom I placed ſo many hopes, regarded but as a repreſentative of myſelf.—Thus, from every concurrent circumſtance, I have reaſon to fear, that Werter will not ſpeedily regain that tranquillity, which forms the peculiar bliſs of thoſe who do not permit paſſion to uſurp the authority of reaſon.

Adviſe me, my dear Carolina, what to do. His continuing to viſit here, will, I fear, but increaſe the paſſion that ought to be ſubdued.

I thank you again and again for your elegant preſent of Engliſh

books. I have read a volume of the "Rambler," and obſerve, that, like the "Night Thoughts," every line contains a ſentence, and every ſentence not only finds its way to the heart, but ought to be regiſtered there.—Adieu!

LETTER XLVI.

NO, my dear Carolina: muſic may ſooth, but cannot ſubdue the paſſions;—it is, indeed, a medicine of the mind, and perhaps the moſt efficacious:—but though it may adminiſter temporary relief, it

it ſeldom removes the diſeaſe. Yet, I believe, every ſyllable I have ever read of its power. And it gives me great pleaſure to find it mentioned as a "ſovereign remedy" in diſeaſes more immediately affecting the mind, by the author of the two medical volumes which formed a part of your acceptable and obliging Engliſh preſent, and which I had before read in a German tranſlation.* This elegant writer has obſerved, that "the ſalutary power of muſic, and its manner of operating

*'Medical Obſervations on Diſeaſes peculiar to Women,' by Dr. John Leake, of Craven-Street; tranſlated into the German, &c.

rating on the body and mind, depend as much upon rational and demonſtrative principles, as that of any medicine in the "Materia Medica."—And I have reaſon to ſubſcribe to the opinion.—"Cicero," he remarks, "aſſerts its amazing power, and Plato ſuppoſes that the effect of harmony on the mind, is equal to that of air on the body. Its divine influence," he continues, "is exemplified by David, in the cure of Saul; and the Eaſtern monarch, who had conquered the world, was himſelf ſubdued by the ſeraphic ſtrains of Timotheus's harp. It mitigates bodily pain, ſuſpends

the

the malignant force of madneſs and diſpair, and lulls the ſoul into tranquillity and peace. Let us," he proceeds, "appeal to the refined feelings of thoſe moſt ſuſceptible of the divine power of harmony, to prove its ſovereign influence over the mind: viz. that it is the true oblivious antidote; — the *Nepenthe* of the gods, to heal the wounded ſpirit, to exalt the mind above low-thoughted care, and lap it in Elyſium."

I am highly delighted with theſe obſervations, becauſe they accord with nature, and are founded on juſt principles. — How exquiſite would

would it be, were all the ſciences, without the incumbrance of hypothetical ſyſtem or profeſſional jargon, thus pleaſingly illuſtrated! Then, indeed, even we, my dear Carolina, might be tempted to exclaim,

> How charming is divine philoſophy!
> Not harſh and crabbed as dull fools ſuppoſe,
> But muſical as is Apollo's lute,
> And a perpetual feaſt of nectar'd ſweets---*

But you aſcribe too much power even to the divinity of muſic, when you imagine its airs might allay the paſſion of Werter, as the wand of a magician is ſuppoſed to quell a tem-

* Milton.

a tempeſt. That it ſometimes "lulls the ſoul into tranquillity and peace," I happily experience: but love is a paſſion—alas! my dear friend, am I not adding fuel to the flame, by adminiſtering the liquid notes of harmony?—And ſuch too as Werter has ſelected!—Since my acquaintance with him, my muſical taſte has undergone conſiderable change. Thoſe compoſitions, whoſe chief merit conſiſts in difficulty of execution, and which I took a pride in performing, are totally rejected for the ſimple ſtrains of ancient melody, which touch the ear with exquiſite ſweetneſs,

and

and find acceſs to the inmoſt receſſes of the heart; and indeed, what is that muſic or poetry good for, which produces no effect on the mind?—There is very little modern muſic that Werter will ſit to hear: he ſays, it is like Gothic architecture, whoſe parts, inſtead of captivating, ſerve to puzzle and confound; whilſt the harmonious ſtrains of antiquity, like the Grecian temples, charm us by an union of grandeur and ſimplicity.

Indeed, ſimplicity ought to be the leading principle, not only in all the arts, but in life itſelf; and happy they, who, in their moral

conduct,

conduct, follow ſimplicity: for "all her ways, are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace!"

LETTER XLVII.

ADIEU! a long adieu to the white hours of domeſtic peace!—O, my Carolina! I ſtand on a fearful precipice, and find no friendly hand to ſnatch me from the diſmal proſpect!—Condemn me not, my deareſt girl,—condemn not your Charlotte—ſhe is innocent, and unhappy.

I ſee,

I ſee, and pity the ſufferings of Werter:—though pity be allied to love, yet, friendſhip ſure may pity:—I pity him, Carolina, and my heart ſinks when I ſee him. Miſerable and dejected, he ſtrives in vain, to hide a paſſion which conſumes him.—His countenance is pale; his ſpirits ſunk, and he no longer joins ſociety with cheerfulneſs. Even in theſe cold nights, the moon only witneſs to his woe, he wanders o'er the hills of Walheim, and ſighs to the blaſt that whiſtles through the leafleſs trees.—Indeed, indeed, Carolina, I cannot but pity him.—His time, his youth,

youth, is waſted in a vain purſuit; his ſpirits deſtroyed; his life, perhaps—O, my Carolina! am I the cauſe of all this miſery?—and can I be happy?

I do not remonſtrate in vain. Alarmed, leſt Albert ſhould notice the fooliſh extravagancies he daily commits, and attribute them to the real cauſe, I reproved Werter for his exceſſes, and pointed out to him the fatal conſequences of a conduct ſo incompatible with my peace. As if paſſion were to be eradicated by impairing reaſon, he drank wine to exceſs, and endeavoured to ſeek

conſo-

conſolation in forgetfulneſs.* To ſee him thus enervate his intellectual faculties, and injure his health, gave me pain, and I diſſuaded him from it; for though wine may drown the finer feelings, it will not extinguiſh paſſion.

"O Charlotte," he ſaid, "let me indulge myſelf in forgetting every thing: even in forgetting you, beſt and deareſt of women! —let me forget all your charms, and all your goodneſs; for every tender recollection"—"Do not," I ſaid, "do not purſue this courſe;—Think of Charlotte!"—For, if I can

* See Werter, Letter LXVII.

can by any means turn his paſſion to his own advantage, am I not right to do it?—But to find, that I have this influence makes me unhappy.

My dear Carolina!—friend of my heart!—thou, who in knowing, ſhareſt all my ſufferings, with Charlotte bend the knee to Providence, for the reſtoration of ſweet tranquillity!—I aſk not happineſs—Illumine once more, O heaven! with the cheering rays of thy peace, the ſorrowful boſom of Charlotte!

LET-

LETTER XLVIII.

IT will not be, my Carolina! I aſk too great a bounty at the hand of heaven: every thing concurs to make me wretched:—Alas! there is no peace for Charlotte.

Werter has ſeen him, Carolina! he has ſeen Henry!—"Were I like *him*," he ſaid, "I ſhould be happy; he knows not his wretchedneſs:—in his boſom there is room for hope: he climbs the wild rock to gather flowers in winter; but I have no object; I wander"—

"Why

" Why, Werter," I ſaid, " why will you ſeek every opportunity to aggravate diſtreſs?"—He interrupted me: " There is but one way," " to be like him—there is but one way for Werter to be as happy as Henry."—" What do you mean, Werter?" I ſaid, and held him my trembling hand—" Alas!" he replied, " that the poſſeſſion of this boaſted reaſon ſhould be given us only to diſtinguiſh, and to adore the excellencies we cannot obtain!" —" Indeed, Werter," I ſaid, " you are not well; repoſe yourſelf:"—and I flew to my harpſichord. I could hardly play; but, that he might

might not imagine I regarded any thing he had ſaid, I attempted to ſing one of his favourite airs. He ſat, and looked at me, as I have ſeen Henry look ;—and when I had finiſhed the air, he ſaid, " Charlotte is kind : ſhe comes like a miniſtering angel of light, and with ſeraphic ſtrains, leads my mind from woe : thanks, my deareſt Charlotte,—I breathe again !"—

Fortunately the children came in from walking, and by their innocent prattle, diverted his attention. The whole cry was for a ſtory : " Tell us the ſtory of the prince that was ſerved by dwarfs," ſaid Joſephina.

ſephina.— " No, no,"— exclaims Maria, who can hardly ſpeak plain yet, " Tell us the ſtory of the little boy and the giant." The little boy and the giant carried the day, and Werter told it with ſo much ſolemnity, that though they had heard it twenty times before, they were wonderfully ſilent. Maria ſat on his knee, and all the reſt ſtood round him, with their eyes fixed on him, delighted to hear how the little boy got into the giant's caſtle, and took away all his fine things; " which he could never have done," ſaid Werter, " if he had not been a very good boy;"—for,

to tell children a ſtory without a moral adapted to their capacities, is giving them unwholeſome food; it is ſowing tares without wheat, and planting ſhrubs that will bear neither fruit nor foliage.

The children were no ſooner put to bed, than Albert came in, and I thought he looked coolly on Werter. I believe I was miſtaken, for I afterwards found, that he had been engaged in buſineſs, that had, in ſome degree, ruffled his temper. As I knew Werter was ignorant of the cauſe of Henry's wretched ſituation, I retired the moment I heard that unhappy ſubject introduced.—It is impoſſible

impoſſible, my dear Carolina, to deſcribe the perturbations I experienced during this interval. I conſidered the impreſſions every word would make on the mind of Werter, already agitated with a ſight of the miſerable ſufferer.—I went into my chamber, and, reflecting on my ſituation, I could not refrain tears, and, on my knees, to aſk of providence the bleſſing of his protection, and to ſhower on our afflicted minds the reviving dews of heavenly tranquillity.—And ſurely heaven heard my prayers, for when I returned, Werter ſeemed compoſed; but on leaving

us,

us, gave me a look that affected me, as if I were conſcious of having committed ſome crime.—Thus it is, my Carolina, that my feelings are, as it were, played upon, and every note, alas, ſtrikes ſorrow to my heart.—Adieu, my deareſt friend, once more, adieu!

LETTER XLIX.

TOO well I know the heart of Werter, my dear Carolina, too well, alas, I know his heart, to follow your friendly counſel.—My mind miſgives me, when I think

I think of telling him, not to waſte his time at Walheim lodge.—The exceſs of his paſſion, Carolina—I ſhudder but to think of it!—

I have reaſon, Carolina, to imagine fearful things.—And though I am depreſſed and ſpiritleſs,—ſo far, alas, from following your counſel,—I receive him with borrowed ſmiles—yes, your once lively Charlotte is a ſtranger to the ſweet emotions of heart-felt cheerfulneſs—and treat him with mild complacency.* This conduct might appear blameable in the eyes of a ſtranger;

* See Werter, Letter LXIX.

but my Carolina knows my heart. We muſt ſuit our actions, ſo as that they never deviate from the line of rectitude, to the exigencies of time.—O heaven! that ever Charlotte—my heart, be ſtill!

The ſtory of Henry has made a deep impreſſion on the mind of Werter. — "Nothing," he ſaid, yeſterday, "nothing but his happy tranſition"—*happy* he called it!—"could have made exiſtence ſufferable: yet I endure"—"Werter," I ſaid, "you ſeek diſtreſs, and indulge yourſelf in imaginary woes." —"Imaginary! Charlotte?"—and, lifting up his eyes, he added—"O God!

God! thou haſt pitied Henry—thou haſt taken him from himſelf—but Werter"—"Forbear Werter," I ſaid, "forbear this wild extravagance: I muſt not hear you; it is cruel to remind me of Henry's ſufferings"—"Can Werter then," he ſaid, "be cruel to Charlotte? he whoſe life is not worth a thought, who"—"Pardon me, Werter," I ſaid, "a life like yours, which might be rendered an ornament to ſociety"—"Alas," he replied, "the exiſtence of any human creature is of little moment: as every tree adds to the ſhade of the foreſt, ſo one being adds to the number

number of ſociety; but he falls like a plant in an unknown valley, unnoticed, and quickly forgotten." —" Nay, Werter," I ſaid, " you do wrong to ſociety: no man falls unnoticed, nor unregretted; we bedew with tears the pale corſe, and remember with tenderneſs the virtues that gave lovelineſs to life. But if it were not ſo, think," I added, " think, Werter, of the conſequence of life in the eye of heaven — of him who regardeth even the fall of a ſparrow!"—Taking hold of my hand, and kiſſing it, he ſaid, " It is in your power, Charlotte—if, indeed, all ſociety were

were like yours—who would not wiſh for life, when to live would be to enjoy happineſs?"—"Theſe compliments, Werter," I ſaid," "are due elſewhere."—"Compliments!"—he exclaimed, and began to walk haſtily about the room. At that inſtant Albert came in, and relieved me from a converſation that exceedingly oppreſſed me.

Always welcome, my dear Albert!—How thy ſteady mildneſs, and the ſerenity of thy reaſon, charm away the perturbations of my mind, and reſtore half its infant peace to

my

my throbbing heart! * — Thou com'ſt like the ſmiling bluſhes of the breezy morning, after a tempeſtuous night.

Do not cenſure me for rejecting your counſel. I give thee, my deareſt girl, a thouſand thouſand thanks for thy good wiſhes.—Is there no certain courſe?—To temporize is dangerous.—Whilſt Werter regards ſociety with indifference

* In this, as well as ſeveral other paſſages, the language is too poetical for epiſtolary compoſition. It may, however, with juſtice, be remarked, that it is a prevailing fault among young writers, to give into this kind of diction, eſpecially thoſe whoſe reading, like Charlotte's, has been chiefly confined to the poets.

rence, and is "at war with himſelf"—do you not ſee the fatal tendency of his ſentiments?—O Carolina!—I tremble as I write—Adieu!

LETTER L.

HOW dangerous is that philoſophy which lends its aid to melancholy, and dreſſes creation in the robes of ſorrow!—which extinguiſhes the lambent flame of cheerfulneſs, and ſinks in clouds the glimmering ſtar of reaſon!—This is that fatal philoſophy which, inſtead

inſtead of repreſſing, gives internal ſuccour to the paſſions, and adds the influence of ſentiment to the emotions of deſire; and—O my Carolina!—this is the philoſophy of Werter!

To day again—"I ſee Charlotte," he ſaid, "I plainly ſee what is the deſtiny of man:—he muſt fill up the meaſure of his ſufferings, and drink the bitter draught;—none are excluded from this — the lot is univerſal; and had I not the mournful privilege to bathe this hand with tears" — I interrupted him: "Indeed, Werter," I ſaid, "Providence is kind to all;—what though

'though ſadneſs tarrieth through the night, joy cometh in the morning;'—but you, Werter, have no right to utter the language of complaint; you, whoſe mind is enlarged, and who have faculties to enjoy every intellectual bleſſing. —Conſider, Werter," I added, "conſider the thouſands that pine in want, that ſicken with diſeaſe, to whom the ſun brings no comfort, and the night no repoſe—others, to whom the world is a dreary wilderneſs through which, with ſorrowful hearts, they wander, and find not where to lay their head, till, deſtitute and comfortleſs,

with

with no pitying voice to ſooth their ſorrows, no kind hand to relieve their wants, they ſink, with eyes uplifted to the ruling power, and they expire, Werter, without a murmur—nay, they bleſs the hand that afflicts—and ſhall we, Werter,"—"O Charlotte!" he ſaid, "it is hard to know the human heart; they that thus wander in miſery, and embrace their woe, find ſome ſecret charm in exiſtence, and claſp the imaginary good till it deſerts them."—"Yes, Werter," I replied, "there *is* a ſecret charm that weds them to their woe: the ſtill ſmall voice

that

that whiſpers comfort, and tells them that felicity is the attendant of ſubmiſſion; and vain is that philoſophy, Werter, which, by expanding the mind, weakens principle."—"I boaſt not of philoſophy," he ſaid, "*my* mind, Charlotte, admits not of its comforts: one image only dwells there—the whole world affords no diverſity to me—'tis a blank"—"Where, Werter," I aſked, where is that ſpirit of genius, and that love of nature from which you derived unſpeakable pleaſures?—where the friendly cheerfulneſs that gave delight to our evenings, and made winter pleaſing?

pleaſing? — Indeed, Werter," I added, ſmiling, though my heart was full, "Indeed, you muſt be corrected:—is it not childiſh, for the want of ſome particular object, to reject all the bleſſings that ſurround us?—we cannot enjoy perpetual ſunſhine."—"Go on, deareſt of women," he ſaid, "go on: I can bear this from you, becauſe you, Charlotte, are that one object for which I have patience to look on others—but when I leave you, my dear Charlotte, then all my reſolves vaniſh—I ſee your image—your voice continues to charm me—every thing affects my heart, but

thoſe precepts that would inſtil forgetfulneſs, and make me look on Charlotte with indifference: I cannot," he added, "Charlotte, I cannot forget, and whilſt I remember, I muſt be miſerable."—"Come, Werter," I ſaid, and I gave him my hand, "I am ſure your health is impaired, and you expoſe yourſelf too much to the rigour of the wintry elements: let your friendſhip for us, induce you to be more careful of yourſelf."—

Having ſaid this, I went to my harpſichord, and played ſome lively airs.—How I learn to deceive myſelf!

ſelf!—whilſt my fingers ſtrike the notes of joy, my heart throbs with woe!—Alas, my Carolina! will it never again feel the vibration of rapture?

LETTER LI.

I WAS not miſtaken—Carolina, my miſery is complete!—Albert—how ſhall I write, whilſt my eyes ſtream with tears, and my hand trembles thus?—Albert—O, Carolina! what am I become that Albert—my heart bleeds,—I cannot write—Gracious God! am I doomed only to create ſorrow?

LET-

LETTER LII.

HE treats him coldly, yet he finds him here!—Yes, my deareſt friend, I am guiltleſs—Alas, that my hours wore the colour of my thoughts!—I am guiltleſs, Carolina, — but Albert's peace is wounded!—O no!—'tis a fatal deluſion:—if Charlotte were innocent, could Albert be unhappy?—My thoughts!—heaven only reads my thoughts—heaven only ſees my heart.—Albert marks my woe—he ſees dimneſs in my eyes—he hears the ſigh I vainly endeavour to ſup-

preſs—he hears, and thinks it is a ſigh to Werter: for—bleſſed with her Albert—ſhould grief find ſhelter in the heart of Charlotte?

No, my Carolina, he will not—ſurely Albert cannot doubt the fidelity of his Charlotte.—He knows her heart—he knows its tenderneſs.—Its tenderneſs, Albert! never ſhall become a weakneſs:—"Affliction may ſubdue the cheek, but not take in the mind."—O God! who knoweſt my heart, ſtrengthen and ſupport it, that,—in ſuffering under thy will—the voice of murmuring may never paſs my lips!

Werter

Werter ſees Albert look on me with the eye of reſerve—it pierces him to the heart. He ſees he is an unwelcome gueſt at Walheim lodge—and yet he is daily here!—Unhappy man! why will he purſue the viſionary ſhade that leads to ruin?

On every ſide diſtreſſed!—The children rejoicing at the approaching feſtival, call to my remembrance happy, happy hours that are paſt! Their little hearts exult, and they talk of nothing but Chriſtmas and ſweetmeats, and what pleaſures are coming, when Carolina and Thereſa will bring them toys

toys from the town!—The dear infants caſt their wondering eyes on my ſtarting tears; their joy is ſuddenly ſuppreſſed, and their harmleſs boſoms throb with a ſenſation they never felt before.—Alas, my Carolina! what has Charlotte done, that heaven thus afflicts her, and all around her?—If I have wandered into indiſcretion—and if indiſcretion *thus* is puniſhed, what muſt be the lot of guilt!—Father of mercies!—ſhield me!

Werter has not been gone long. He was here all the afternoon, and was going before; but I would make him ſtay till Albert came,

to

to ſave me the confuſion of ſaying he had been here in Albert's abſence.—Inſtead of converſing with me, Albert takes a book, or amuſes himſelf with the children.—His reſerve, Carolina, chills my heart! I ſee no kindneſs in his eye. I watch in vain for thoſe glances that ſpeak the ſilent ſatisfaction of the ſoul;—and inſtead of ſoothing my mind with muſic, I retire to indulge myſelf in tears.

LETTER LIII.

WHERE is the peace that bleſſes the vacant mind? —Is it the lot of ſenſibility to be wretched?—Or am I not dead to ſenſibility? —When I thought I poſſeſſed it in a more than common degree, was I not more than commonly happy?—Have I not often ſaid, that even the grief of ſenſibility is a luxury?

Sad luxury! to vulgar minds unknown!

I feel for the woes of another, and I am wretched.—I am ſomething more than wretched, Carolina:—a new

new ſenſation ariſes in my boſom—I tremble to think!—perhaps it is guilt!—Are then my tears criminal?—are my ſighs offenſive to heaven?—They are, my Carolina!—for do they not wound the peace of Albert?—

How difficult is it, to conduct ourſelves with unerring propriety, when the heart is ſubject to thoſe emotions which tend to an untimely indulgence of even virtuous inclination!

LET-

LETTER LIV.

IN vain I try to ſooth my mind with muſic. Even the moſt lively airs add to my melancholy. They recal to my memory paſt pleaſures.

> Of joys departed, never to return,
> How painful the remembrance!

When the memory is tenacious of paſt felicity, and hope fails to fill the mind with ideal proſpects of future bliſs; then it is, that anguiſh becomes doubly bitter; and the retroſpection even of innocence, adds

adds new ſighs to melancholy, and gives freſh poignancy to grief.—Let the ſoothing voice of thy friendſhip, Carolina, calm my troubled ſpirit, and teach me to regain the conſolation—the unſpeakable conſolation—of a mind at eaſe!

LETTER LV.

YOUR letter, my dear friend, gives me comfort; but Carolina's letters always communicate a ray of that divine peace, which beams in her own mind.

Werter

Werter has not been here to day, and I feel my heart calm. Albert ſmiled when he came in, and my boſom, for a moment, fluttered with a ſenſation it has long been a ſtranger to. My father too came, and told us, he had found a companion for Werter—"And Werter," Albert ſaid, "would do well to ſeek company." It was Antonine, whoſe ſtory my father had accidentally learned, and told to Albert.—I ſaw it affected him; and, for the firſt time in my life, I heard him uſe an acrimonious expreſſion: it related to the conduct of Adelaide.—As if I had been equally guilty,

guilty, I felt the ſeverity of his remark, and retired to give relief to my feelings. This too was the firſt time my dear father ever adminiſtered to the diſtreſs of his Charlotte:—happily for him, he knew it not.

I cannot ſubſcribe to your opinion, that I ſhould ſpeak to Albert on this unhappy ſubject. Though the object would be to vindicate my innocence, would not ſuch an appeal imply a degree of ſelf-conviction? Silence beſt becomes unaccuſed innocence.—And if, indeed, it were adviſeable, how, my Carolina, how ſhould I find words,

words,—how find power to utter them?—Charlotte was never taught the language of ſupplication, but when ſhe addreſſed the throne of mercy.

My father enquires after you, my dear Carolina, and depends—as we all do—on ſeeing you very ſoon. The winter has not made leſs havock about Walheim, than ſorrow has in the boſom of your friend. Your favourite lime trees, at the top of the garden, are blown down; the waters have done conſiderable damage, and the river in the valley, on whoſe banks we have ſo often wandered in ſummer evenings,

is now a dreary ſea. Too like the change I find in my own mind, I look on it with terror. My eyes ſearch in vain for the objects that diverſified the beauties of the valley—I ſee nothing but a ſolitary tree, reſerved, like myſelf, to be a witneſs of more woe :—a weeping monument of what has been!

LETTER LVI.

YES, a kind of deſolation ſurrounds me. Nature ſeems as dead to animation, as my heart to joy. Yet ſpring ſhall renew the foliage

liage of the fields, and ſummer ſuns ſhall ripen the harveſt of autumn.—Perhaps tranquillity may reviſit my boſom, and Charlotte may again be happy.—This is the language of hope:—of hope far diſtant; the proſpect before me is gloomy: it preſents ſcenes of terror—I dread to look forwards—O Thou! at whoſe word, myriads of worlds ruſh into exiſtence, and whoſe ſmile diffuſes joy through all—diſpel the gloom of ſorrow, and chaſe from hence the ſhadow of deſpair—let cheerfulneſs reviſit my ſad boſom, and domeſtic felicity once more reign at Walheim.

Anxiety,

Anxiety, my deareſt friend, anxiety preys on my heart. Unknown to me now, are the delightful pleaſures reſulting from the cheerful converſe of ſurrounding friends, and the communion of elegant ſentiment.—Alas, my Carolina! can I recal the paſt, without tears?—the days of infancy, when my heart was a ſtranger to all ſorrow, and the ſmiles of my deareſt mother made a heaven indeed!—Why do my tears ſtream afreſh?—Her ſpirit hovers over me: I hear her voice.—Thoſe are the ſoothing, the ſweeteſt moments of my life, when, rapt in a pleaſing

deluſion, I ſee, and I converſe with the ſhade of her whoſe bleſſing will preſerve me.

Have I not ſeen her, where ſhe has not been?
Have I not claſp'd her ſhadow? Trod her ſteps;
Tranſported trod! as if they led to heaven?*

Had ſhe yet lived—had Werter known her, he would have revered and loved her. The contemplation of her virtues, the charms of her converſation, would have ſoothed his mind, and rectified his judgment; and the fancied excellencies of Charlotte would have made no impreſſion on the mind of Werter.

Pardon

* Young.

Pardon me, my dear Carolina: pardon this incoherency.—When ſhall I be able again to write with a heart at eaſe?—

LETTER LVII.

LIKE thoſe evaneſcent glimmerings before death, which ſometimes flatter weeping friends with illuſive hopes, were the ſerene moments that whiſpered returning peace to my ſoul. Alas, they are fled!—and again—

Albert continues to love his Charlotte; he has given eaſe to

her heart even by reproof; it was the reproof of cruelty and tenderneſs. A day or two ago, when he went out,—for he would not ſee my tears; he would not mark my confuſion,—as he opened the door, and I could not ſee his countenance, he ſaid,—"From a regard to appearance only, it would be well, Charlotte, to abate the ardour of your friendſhip to Werter, and not ſee him ſo often."—It was in vain that I haſtened to the door—it was in vain that I cried, "O Albert! hear me!"—he was gone. I ran up to my chamber window, and ſaw him walk with haſty ſteps from the lodge, and often put his handker-

handkerchief to his eyes. It pierced my heart, that the deareſt and beſt of men, ſhould leave his Charlotte thus, and fly from her that ſhould wipe away his tears. I ſaw him increaſe the quickneſs of his walk, as if diſtance from Charlotte would afford relief to his mind. Alas, I could not ſee him long!—my eyes ſtreamed;—I ſunk on a chair.

When my tears had ſufficiently relieved me, and my heart ceaſed to beat with exceſs of grief, I determined inſtantly to obey the command of Albert, and to find out ſome mode of relieving myſelf from

from the viſits of Werter. I received conſolation from the reflection, that Albert would ſoon ſee Charlotte valued his peace, and revered his mandate.

In the evening, before Albert returned, Werter came.—I was preparing Chriſtmas gifts for the children. I thought Werter ſeemed in better ſpirits than uſual. He talked of the innocent delights of infancy; and ſaid, he envied the happineſs of children that were unexpectedly ſurpriſed with fruit and ſweetmeats, uſhered in with wax-lights that communicate a ſudden rapture to every countenance:—

" You

"You ſhall have a gift too," I ſaid, "if you behave well."—"What do you mean, Charlotte?" he aſked.—"Thurſday night," I replied, "is Chriſtmas-eve: the children are all to be here—do you come too—but do not come before that time."—He looked earneſtly in my face; I ſaw his emotion; but I repeated my requeſt. "We muſt not," I added, "go on in this manner any longer."—I found my heart relieved by having ſaid ſo much. Werter, in great agitation, walked acroſs the room. He gave no attention to ſeveral queſtions that I aſked him, but

but at laſt ſaid, " Charlotte, I will never ſee you more!"—" Nay, Werter," I ſaid, " we may, we muſt ſee one another."—I marked the fire in his eyes, and, taking his hand, I begged of him to be calm, and to conquer an attachment to me, who could only pity him.—" Do not," I ſaid, " deceive yourſelf: do not ſeek your own deſtruction; why muſt it be only me, me who belong to another?"—He looked at me with an angry countenance.—The tears of Albert had made too great an impreſſion to to be eaſily effaced, and I continued to entreat Werter to get the better

of

of his unfortunate attachment: I adviſed him to ſee more company, —to travel. Lifting up his eyes, he ſaid—" A little time, Charlotte and all will be well!" — Again I begged him, not to come before Chriſtmas-eve.

Albert came in: he might eaſily diſcover confuſion in Werter, and coldly aſked him to ſtay ſupper. I wiſhed he would; but dare not join in the requeſt. — A painful ſilence ſucceeded. Werter's heart was full; and at laſt he took leave of us abruptly—I knew it was to hide his tears.

Albert

Albert obſerved his confuſion, and attributing it to my having attended to his admonition, became cheerful, but ſeemed to avoid ſaying any thing of Werter, who, I told him, would not come again till Chriſtmas eve.—" I muſt go, Charlotte," Albert ſaid, " to W. Selftadt's ; I have neglected that buſineſs too long."—I knew, my dear Carolina, of this journey, and that it would detain Albert all night ; and I feared it was poſtponed for a reaſon which I trembled to think on. This intimation confirmed the idea ; and I could not but

but grieve that Albert ſhould doubt the faith of Charlotte.

Where there is no confidence, there can be no happineſs :—and ſhould Albert—can he—alas ! what means this preſſure of my heart? my mind is guiltleſs ; yet it whiſpers fearful things !

Now, my Carolina, now it is, that I feel the ſacred influence of religious ſentiment, and the unſpeakable bleſſing of a ſpotleſs mind. Amidſt all my diſtreſs, it conveys a ſenſation which philoſophy cannot communicate. It is the holy ſtar that guides my wandering ſteps, and ſaves me from deſpair !

LETTER LVIII.

ALL, all may yet be well, my Carolina!—The abſence of Werter affords my mind relief; and Albert loves his Charlotte with tenderneſs. Thereſa will ſoon be here, and your preſence, my dear friend, will add to the pleaſures of the approaching feſtival.

I have not ſlept of late, till laſt night, and I had pleaſant dreams. Philoſophy teaches us to deſpiſe the chimeras of fancy, while the poet ſays that "dreams deſcend from Jove." It is long, my dear-

eſt

eſt girl, ſince my mind dwelt on a pleaſing idea, and I will, for a moment, indulge myſelf in the recollection of imaginary bliſs.—And what, but imaginary, is the bliſs of half the world?—The pleaſures of ambition, of pomp, of luxury, all, all imaginary—all deluſive as the viſions of a mind diſturbed.

My fancy preſented a ſpacious garden, blooming with flowers, and watered with fountains; diverſified with ſhrubberies, and vocal with melody. The lodge and the ſhades of Walheim ſeemed afar off. I wandered a conſiderable time, lamenting the abſence of

Albert,

Albert, as we always wiſh thoſe whom we love beſt to partake of all our pleaſures.—Aſcending an eminence, rendered inviting by a pleaſant arbour on its ſummit, my foot ſlipped, and, at that inſtant, —O, my Carolina! my heart yet glows with the fiction!—I found myſelf in the arms of the beſt of women, my dear mother, whilſt Albert, with ſmiles, ſeemed to wait our approach in the arbour.—She embraced us tenderly. I was loſt in ecſtaſy. Throwing my arms round Albert's neck, and bathing his boſom with tears of joy, "Albert," I ſaid, "I am thine indeed!"

deed!"—With ſweet mildneſs, my mother bleſſed us: "Be faithful, and be happy!—Remember," ſhe ſaid, "always remember,

When lovers ſwear true faith, the liſtening angels
Stand on the golden battlements of heaven,
And waft their vows to the eternal throne."

I fancied we quitted the arbour, and that, caſting my eyes towards Walheim, I beheld Werter, pale, and with tears, paſſing through the grove of lime trees—Turning to ſpeak, the ſudden diſappearance of that deareſt of women and of Albert, awoke me.—

Yet

Yet even this, my Carolina, fictious as it is, made me happy. To feel my heart throb with joy, though in a dream, is now a luxury to Charlotte!

LETTER LIX.

HAPPY they whoſe ill-fortune extends not to their friends! —whoſe ſufferings do not wound the peace of thoſe they love beſt! —But love ſhares our woes, and gives a double bitterneſs to miſery. My dear, dear Carolina, do not let my misfortunes ruin the tranquil-

lity

lity of thy mind: do not, my deareſt girl, ſuffer with me: — pity, and comfort me.

And comfort, Carolina, will be a welcome gueſt; ſurely it will come with Carolina and Thereſa. Albert is gone his journey. Alone, and melancholy, how could I ſuſtain new ſorrow? — how could I bear additional calamity, and live to tell thee, my Carolina, that Henry —I know thou wilt turn pale—poor Henry is no more!

In his wanderings — wretched wanderer that he was!—he ſtrayed through a neighbouring village afflicted with an endemial fever; he

became infected, and was ill ſome days. As his ſtrength decayed, his mind returned. He talked of Charlotte:—he enquired after my dear mother, who always treated him with kindneſs; he was told ſhe was dead! — He wrung his hands, and cried like a child—"But Charlotte," he ſaid, "Charlotte is alive."—His poor mother—unhappy, unthinking woman! — ſaid, "Charlotte is married to Albert." —His cries inſtantly ceaſed; with wildneſs in his eyes, and raiſing his folded hands, he ſunk in his mother's arms and expired.

This day the earth received his remains: accidentally going into one

of the back chambers, I ſaw at a diſtance the melancholy proceſſion: my heart turned cold—I wiſhed to avoid the ſight, but could not move.* My eyes were filled with tears, and yet I gazed and ſaw the train of mourners, through the branches of the trees covered with ſnow, and ſhaken with chilling blaſts: the wind was high, and conveyed to my ears the mournful notes of the funeral pſalm, which they

* Funerals in Germany, are uſually attended by all the relatives of the deceaſed, beſides friends, ſometimes forming a proceſſion of eighty or a hundred people, uniformly clad in mourning cloaks.

they ſung as they moved along; ſometimes by a ſudden guſt of wind, I heard the faint ſound of the diſtant bell.—When they came oppoſite the lodge, for a moment, every eye was turned towards the wretched manſion of Charlotte.—Alone, and terrified, I ſunk on my knees: I lifted my ſtreaming eyes to heaven, but I could not ſpeak—God ſaw my ſorrows and pitied me: he took from my mind, the poignancy of grief.—I aroſe, and my eyes once more wandered after the ſad ſpectacle. At a diſtance from the reſt, I ſaw a young man,

man, with folded arms, his looſe hair ſtreaming in the wind, and his eyes fixed on the earth, following with penſive ſteps, the ſorrowful proceſſion. From Thereſa's deſcription, I knew it was the unhappy Antonine, who, feeling what it is to love, and be deſerted, perhaps envies the everlaſting peace of Henry!—For thy peace, melancholy youth! is to be envied by all who know not the felicity of a mind at eaſe—Thy poor diſtracted brain no longer dwells on real or fancied miſery: thy heart no longer beats with unnutterable feelings;

ings; thou haſt found a cure for all affliction:

Death ends thy woe,
And the kind grave ſhuts up the mournful ſcene.

O my Carolina! there is an anguiſh in my mind which I will not, —cannot deſcribe to thee: muſt I communicate nothing but ſorrow? Surely Albert's return will give relief to my heart. Adieu! my deareſt friend, my kind Carolina, adieu!

LET-

LETTER LX.

CHANCE—no, it is not chance, for what,—Father of lights!—what has chance to do in a world governed by thy providence? No: it is thy will that Charlotte ſhould ſuffer; that one woe ſhould ſucceed another, as clouds follow clouds, and gather into ſtorms—but let thy goodneſs diſperſe them—mercifully diſperſe them, before they overwhelm me!

A few hours after I had ſeen the melancholy ſpectacle of Henry's funeral, my mind had become, in ſome

ſome degree, calm; and in the evening, I ſat muſing on the viciſſitudes to which even a life of retirement is expoſed. I thought on Werter: I recalled to my mind paſt ſcenes; and lamented the fate of an attachment from which I promiſed myſelf the pleaſures of an innocent friendſhip.—I felt, deeply felt, for the anxiety of Albert, who, in his abſence, might think too much of Werter, when—to my inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment—I heard the voice of Werter on the ſtairs! —It was too late to be denied. I was diſtreſſed, and reproved him. For ſome minutes, I knew not what

to

to do; at laſt I ſent to deſire Sophia Andran, to come and ſit with me; ſhe had company. I ſent to others, but before the ſervant returned, it rained violently. I then thought of calling in my maid; but, conſcious of my own innocence, and aſhamed to take ſo unuſual a ſtep, I ſat down to my harpſichord, and, after playing a few minutes, to prevent Werter entering into converſation, I deſired him to read ſomething, and gave him his own tranſlation of Oſſian. I ſaw his heart was full; and the paſſage he read affected me to tears. It conveyed an idea of our mutual ſufferings.

Werter

Werter ſeized my hand, and kiſſed it with an agitation that made me tremble.—I deſired him to proceed with the poem: "To morrow," he read, "ſhall the traveller come; he that ſaw me in my beauty ſhall come: his eyes will ſearch the field, but they will not find me." —The heart of Werter ſunk at theſe words: a torrent of tears ran down his cheeks; he threw himſelf at my feet, and whilſt his whole frame ſhook, he put my hands againſt his forehead.—Horror, inſtantly converted into pity, ſeized me; my heart told me his fatal reſolution: a thouſand ſenſations

ſations aroſe in my boſom—fear, —pity, was predominant:—trembling, I ſunk in his arms;—for the firſt time, theſe lips met the lips of Werter. The ardour of his embrace recalled my bewildered ſenſes: "Werter!" I ſaid, with a tremulous accent,—but he preſſed me to his boſom;—raiſing myſelf, and turning my face from him, the picture of my dear mother met my eyes. The full idea of virtue ruſhed into my mind: I was inſtantly collected, and with a determined tone, I repeated "Werter!"—He fell on his knee before me—O Carolina! what emotions at that moment,

ment, filled my torn boſom!—at that moment, at once pitying and reſenting, I pronounced the words of eternal ſeparation!—"This is the laſt time!—Werter, you will never ſee me more!"—My heart bled, Carolina, as I ſpoke the words—I ſpoke them, and with a laſt look, flew into my room.

O, my Carolina! what a night of terror and diſtreſs!—How did my heart beat when I heard the door ſhut after Werter!—the rain poured; and the dreadful idea he had raiſed in my mind—my imagination preſented ſuch fearful images!—It was in vain to ſeek repoſe:

repoſe: a thouſand recollections kept me awake. A new ſenſation pervaded my boſom—yes, my Carolina, I felt a friendſhip too tender for Werter; and, for the firſt time, I dreaded the looks of Albert.—

Long, and diſmal was the night; my hurried fancy was filled with ſad ideas:—the new-made grave of Henry;—the floods of water that Werter, in diſpair, muſt paſs in his gloomy road to Walheim!—At one moment the fervour of his kiſſes thrilled through my heart, whilſt bluſhes burned my cheeks:—the next, my veins ran cold, when I thought I heard his ſighs

ſighs in the howling wind, that almoſt ſhook the lodge.—To add to my grief, the morning light promiſed no comfort. At length ſleep came to my relief; ſhort ſleep, diſturbed by gloomy viſions; but in the morning, my ſpirits wearied out, ſunk in repoſe; and I was but juſt ariſen, when Albert returned.

LETTER LXI.

WHAT dreadful lives, alas! muſt they lead, my Carolina, who have feelings to hide, and

and from thoſe that love them moſt!—I was alarmed, leſt Albert ſhould diſcover ſadneſs in my eyes, and tried to receive him with a glow of ecſtaſy: he was cool, and when he aſked me who I had ſeen, I ſaid, "Werter ſpent an hour here yeſterday."—Going into his own room, he replied, "He chuſes his time well."—It ſtung me to the heart; and, for a moment, I felt an emotion ſomething allied to reſentment; but then I recollected, how good, how gentle, how ſteady,—all the amiable qualities of my dear Albert filled my mind, and, taking my work, I followed, and

aſked

aſked him whether he wanted any thing; he ſaid, "No," and began to write. It was painful to hide my tears. I ſuffered enough; but to complete my wretchedneſs, Werter's boy came with a fatal meſſage: —"Give him the piſtols," Albert ſaid. — I ſtarted — my heart died away—my blood ran cold—O Carolina! how did my trembling limbs ſupport me?—I took down the deadly inſtruments.—Freezing with horror, I ſtood wiping off the duſt: long, long ſhould I have ſtood, had not the eye of Albert—With tears, I gave them to the poor boy,

who

who ſeemed to wonder, and pity my diſtreſs.

I gave the fatal inſtruments!—Cruel, cruel Charlotte! what haſt thou done!—Why did I not fall at Albert's feet, and tell him all I knew?—"Give him the piſtols!"—O Albert! I heard, and I obeyed thee!—"For a journey!"—Were then my words prophetic?—and ſhall I never ſee thee more?—"Give him the piſtols!"—Carolina! my heart is marble!—"Give him the piſtols!"—Death was in the word—and yet I live!—No comforter, no Carolina,—no Thereſa with me;

I ſent for Sophia Selftadt to dine with me—"Werter," ſhe ſaid, "is a ſtranger of late."—Albert replied, "He is gone a journey."—The tear ſtood in my eye. I ſilently heard Sophia ſpeak of his accompliſhments.—Poor girl! ſhe knew not that every word went to my heart!—

And now, deareſt, beſt of friends! my mind forebodes dreadful calamities!—I know not when I ſhall write to thee again. Pray for me, Carolina—pray for Werter:—I ſee him, Carolina, I ſee him take the fatal arms from the innocent boy; I hear

I hear him aſk who delivered them: —yes, he kiſſes them as the laſt gift of Charlotte!—

I fear, Carolina, thou canſt not read what I now write—my tears blot the paper—and thine will fall on my ill-omened words.—I cannot write any more to thee;—without any one to comfort or aſſiſt me, my heart ſinks; my hand is feeble.—Recollect, my deareſt Carolina, all the ſcenes of our youth:—remember Charlotte always loved thee. My hand fails me—adieu! adieu! —I ſend thee Werter's picture—Is it a crime to kiſs it before it leaves me?

me ?—I ſend thee a thouſand kiſſes, Carolina — thou wilt find them warm on Werter's picture.—O Carolina, farewel !—God for ever bleſs thee !

LETTER LXII.

BE not alarmed, my deareſt Carolina—the pen is Thereſa's, but the words are Charlotte's. Haſten, dear girl, to join with Thereſa, in comforting Charlotte. —Yes, my Carolina, Charlotte lives to mourn the death of Werter !—

The

The fatal moment is paſt! — our hopes and fears are in the grave!

He is no more, Carolina! — Werter—he whom we all admired; whom Charlotte now may love, and whoſe memory, whilſt remembrance is her's, will be dear to her, —that unhappy Werter is no more!

I went to bed early laſt night: ſorrow preſſed heavy on me; a dream awoke me—I heard the clock ſtrike twelve—O power of ſympathy!—my heart was ſuddenly chilled—I thought the cold hand of Werter beckoned me!—I ſhrieked: Albert ſtarted from his ſleep, "What cry is that!" he ſaid; I

was

was afraid to ſpeak: I counterfeited ſleep — for, hard as is the taſk, Charlotte has learned to counterfeit—I counted the dark hours till ſix, when it was yet dark;—the gate-bell rung—horror ſhook me: "Albert!" I ſaid, "Albert!—the bell!"—He inſtantly aroſe, and, putting on his night-gown, deſcended. Half-dreſſed, — my heart throbbing with unutterable feelings—I followed. — The ſight of Werter's boy in tears, ſurrounded by the aſtoniſhed ſervants, ſhocked me: Trembling I took hold of Albert's arm—"O my maſter, my dear maſter!"—I heard no more;

Albert's

Albert's arm could not ſupport me: I fell—

O Carolina! in this inſenſibility I ſhared the peace of Werter:—my ſpirit fled!—I know not what paſſed, till in the evening, I found Thereſa by my bed-ſide, reading the laſt letter of Werter.—I wiſh—but I dare not hear it read.

Heaven, my Carolina, is yet merciful: it has ſpared my life to comfort Albert, who knows, and is convinced—too fatally convinced—of Charlotte's true faith. I ſhall live, I hope, to accompliſh the laſt commands of my dear mother;—I will ſee her children cloathed and

fed

fed—I will teach the ſweet infants all that I know: all that ſhe taught Charlotte; but whilſt I am thus,—Carolina and Thereſa muſt aſſiſt me.

For whatever wiſe purpoſes God has thus afflicted me—he has given me power again to addreſs his throne—I am thankful and ſubmiſſive.—Haſten to us, Carolina: let Charlotte once more embrace her friend.

LET-

LETTER LXIII.

I HAVE heard his laſt letter! I have wept over every endearing recollection: Albert joined his tears with mine; he will build a tomb to perpetuate the memory of Werter's love to Charlotte; for though it was exceſſive, it was virtuous.

The dear children kneel around my bed. They lift up their little hands, and pray for Charlotte—"The black men muſt not take Charlotte:—Papa and Mr. Werter will kill the black men that carried

mama

mama away."—Dear, dear innocents!—fear no black men: thoſe angels whom you moſt reſemble, will protect you!

O, Werter!—why do you call to my remembrance the ſcenes that are paſt!—In vain ſhall I look for you in the valley!—What will it avail, in a ſummer's evening, to walk towards the mountains, or repoſe me under the elms?—Shall I ſee your ſpirit in the pale clouds, or hear your voice in the paſſing winds?—Alas! the evening ſhadows will terrify me!—Suddenly emerging from behind the clouds, the

the glimmerings of moon-light will ſtartle me!

O, Werter!—was it not cruel, for ever thus to wound the peace of Charlotte?—Surely thy love—but deſpair led thee to the brink—deſpair taught thee this ſad leſſon!—

"May my death remove every obſtacle to your happineſs!"—Death, Werter!—Does it not add to our miſery?—Is not Albert unhappy?—Is not Charlotte wretched?—My father weeps over thee!—We ſhall meet no more in the groves of Walheim!—no more

ſhall

ſhall we ſee thee muſing by the river in the valley!—

His laſt letter recals to my memory a thouſand images of paſt felicity: they ariſe before me in conſtant ſucceſſion, and add to my grief: they are the ſhades of departed pleaſures,—of innocent delights!—

"At the corner of the churchyard, which looks towards the fields, there are two lime trees"—There reſt thy remains!—O Werter!—my father lays thee in the appointed place.—There, will Albert build thy tomb—

But

But, O my Carolina! when I think on the laſt fatal act!—ſurely I ſhall dread to approach the grave of him who thus raſhly "broke the golden bowl, and looſed the ſilver cord"—

Sure, 'tis a fearful, a tremendous act precipitately to ruſh before the awful throne of God!—Not more dreadful would it be for men to behold, at midnight, a riſing ſun ſhorn of his beams, ſpread horror on the earth, than it is for the angelic hoſts to ſee an unſummoned ſpirit paſs the everlaſting portals of the heavens, and, unprotected, ſtand before the grand tribunal!—

O Werter!

O Werter! did no kind cherub pity, and kneel with thee? — did no friendly angel hide thee with his wings?—Vain effort, alas! to hide thee from him "whoſe eye views all things at one view!"

If, O heaven! it is not preſumption, let my laſt prayer be heard for Werter: — may thy mercy equal Charlotte's pity!

THE END.